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Ueber die Anwendung der Methode der Mittleren Abstufungen auf den Lichtsinn. DR. A. LEHMANN. Philos. Studen, 4 Heft. 1886.

The single careful study of this fourth psycho-physic method of average gradation made by Delboeuf, seemed to Dr. Lehmann, working under Wundt's guidance, inconclusive as to the validity of the method. Accordingly, he constructed three large disks of 10 cm. radius, each rotating independently by clockwork. One of these disks had of its four sectors the two alternate sectors black. By a pair of double sectors, one black and the other white, the shade of the other disks could be varied. The problem was to get the sectors of the middle disk, in a room uniformly lighted artificially, so that its shade seemed about midway between that of the other two. The first result showed that it made a great difference in judging whether the quantity of light from the middle disk was gradually increased or diminished. The conclusion of a long series of experiments was that the influence of contrast cannot be excluded, and vitiates the method of average gradation. Contrast could only be excluded by having a background for the middle disk that should always have the same degree of brightness as it has, changing with it, and the three disks must have such a distance between them as to exclude reciprocal contrast. Whether these difficulties can be overcome, can only be ascertained by further experiments.

Ueber die Theorie des Simultanen Contrasts von Helmholtz. E. HERING. Pflüger's Archiv. 1887. pp. 172.

Helmholtz's theory of simultaneous contrast seems to its author to have one of its strongest vouchers in the following experiment with colored shadows: Let a white surface be illuminated by a feeble ray of daylight and also by the reddish yellow light of a candle or gas jet, and let each cast a shadow upon this surface. The shadow of the first is yellow and that of the latter is blue, although it falls on a spot which receives only daylight. This is partly due to successive and partly to simultaneous contrast, and the former is readily eliminated. If the shadow cast by the gas is viewed through a tube so directed that the eye sees only a field within the gas-shadow, it does not seem blue, but does so if a part of the field lit by the gas is seen, adds Helmholtz. Hering, however, declares that this subjective blue is in no sense a "judgment," but is a regular phenomenon of successive contrast, and also that Helmholtz has made a similar error respecting the disappearance of the blue when the tube is laid aside. Hering proceeds to give an elaborate modification of this experiment in three phases, the description of which involves many pages, and which seems to show that the purely psychological explanation of this phenomenon should give place to his own physiological interpretation.

A Contribution to the Pathology of Dreams and of Hysterical Paralysis.
By CH. FÉRÉ, M. D., of the Bicêtre Hospital, Paris. Brain. January, 1887.

It has been repeatedly observed that hallucinations that begin during sleep and are reproduced for several nights consecutively, end by being received as realities during the daytime. Diurnal delirium and even suicidal and homicidal impulses have been observed after two or three nights of dreaming. A single dream

sometimes sets up a mental disturbance that manifests itself the next day. A special relation between dreaming and alcoholic delirium has also been noticed. Dreams may play an important part as a determining cause of epileptic attacks. Nocturnal hysterical fits are sometimes determined by terrifying dreams. A remarkable case of psychic-paralysis due to the same terrifying dream for several successive nights is described. The same patient afforded also a good example of fatigue-paralysis, becoming incapable of phonation after the discharge of another centre. The author concludes that dreaming, and especially repeated dreaming, must not be considered an indifferent phenomenon, but may constitute the opening scene of a morbid drama. The reader would probably ask Dr. Féré whether such dreams as he describes were not caused by the paralysis, and not conversely as he assumes.

Onamatomania. CHARCOT and MAYMAN. *Archiv. of Neurol.* 1886.

A group of symptoms is designated where a single word plays an important role, often causing anxiety, and co-existing with habitual dubitations, fear of contact, or inverted sexual sensations, etc. (1) A single word or name may be irretrievably forgotten; (2) the patient may be impelled to continuously repeat a word; (3) in conversation certain words are emphasized; (4) certain words are used to check the effect of other accidental expressions; (5) as a word may seem to be accidentally swallowed, and great effort is made by hawking and spitting to bring it forth from the stomach. In such cases the patient has full consciousness of his state, and knows his enslavement to these tyrannous impressions. Seven cases are described where the loss of a word caused great disquietude, and when it was found another was lost, and lists of words were made out and kept at hand for relief.

Experiments on Prehension. J. JACOBS. *Mind*, Jan., 1887. With Supplementary Notes on Prehension in Idiots by FRANCIS GALTON.

In these experiments the "span" of "prehension" is measured by the number of letters and numerals that can be correctly repeated after twice hearing, the interval between them in the dictation being about one-half a second. Ebbinghaus's nonsense syllables we at first tried, but rejected because they were found to distract attention and to be too variable in ease of pronunciation, rhythm, degree of novelty and grotesqueness, etc. Numerals are not only fewer than letters, but have less associations by contiguity. Between the ages of eight and nineteen the span of school-girls increases from 6. to 7.9 for letters, and from 6.6 to 8.6 for numerals. Span increases not only with age, but with rank in class, and it is suggested that a "standard span" be added to the items for anthropometric measurement. Mr. Galton found greater individual variation in idiots, but less average span than in normal children.

Ueber Ziele und Wege der Volkerpsychologie. W. WUNDT. *Philos. Studien.* Heft 1. 1887.

The comprehensive program of Volks-psychology given by Lazarus and Steinthal, in the first volume of their journal makes it include language, religion, myth, customs, art and history, and contrast it with individual psychology. As descriptive natural history is illustrated by physics, chemistry and psychology, so history needs